

Message Text

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44

ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 /097 W

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R 141135Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6017

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0634

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SCUL, OAU, MP

SUBJECT: MAURITIUS BOYCOTT OF MONTREAL OLYMPIC GAMES

1. MINISTER OF YOUTH AND SPORTS BASANT RAI, IN RESPONSE TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION JULY 13, EXPLAINED THAT TWO MAURITIAN ATHLETES WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO ATTEND THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CAMP IN MONTREAL COINCIDING WITH OLYMPIC GAMES BECAUSE OF THE OAU BAN ON OLYMPIC PARTICIPATION BY ITS MEMBERS IF NEW ZEALAND WAS PERMITTED TO ATTEND. THE OAU DECISION TO BOYCOTT WAS IN PROTEST OVER THE NEW ZEALAND ALL BLACKS RUGBY TEAM TOUR OF SOUTH AFRICA. COMMENT: MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF THAT GOM EXPECTED THE TWO ATHLETES TO PARTICIPATE IN OLYMPIC COMPETITION EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE ONLY INVITED TO THE YOUTH CAMP. END COMMENT.

2. STATEMENT TOUCHED OFF HEATED DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT LED BY GUY OLLIVRY, LEADER OF UDM OPPOSITION PARTY, AND MAURICE LESAGE, DURING WHICH LESAGE REPORTEDLY ASKED IF MAURITIUS WAS BECOMING A COLONY OF TANZANIA AND RAMGOOLAM TOLD LESAGE TO LOOK IN THE MIRROR AND HE WOULD SEE HE IS THE SAME COLOR AS THE SOUTH AFRICANS.

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WHEN CAM LEADER MOHAMED ATTEMPTED TO INTERJECT A COMMENT,

LESAGE REPORTEDLY CALLED OUT THAT HE ALSO WAS AN ALLY OF SOUTH AFRICA. A MOTION BY OLLIVRY TO CALL ON GOVERNMENT TO REVIEW THE DECISION WAS REJECTED BY THE SPEAKER.

3. COMMENT: GOM APPARENTLY IS USING AFRICAN BOYCOTT OF OLYMPIC GAMES AS A DEVICE TO SHOW ITS SOLIDARITY AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA IN A WAY THAT DOES NOT COST THEM ANYTHING SERIOUS AND COUNTERACT THE BAD PUBLICITY IT HAS BEEN RECEIVING DUE TO ITS STRONG COMMERCIAL TIES WITH SOUTH AFRICA. THE FACT THAT TWO YOUNG ATHLETES, BERNARD RAULT AND PETER DRIVER, ARE NOT OF INDIAN ETHNIC STOCK, MADE THE DECISION EASIER FOR RAM. KEELEY

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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